

Development Plan Manager,
South Lakeland House,
Lowther Street,
Kendal LA9 4DL

Land Allocations Development Plan Document.
Emerging Options Consultation.
Proposal for Milnthorpe and Ackenthwaite.

Dear Sir,

We wish to comment on the proposals for the Parish of Milnthorpe. If large areas of Milnthorpe are built on relatively quickly it would alter the social balance, and an attractive market village would become a suburban development. Over several decades Milnthorpe has had more than its fair share of large estates, there are three at present.

These emerging options show another three large sites in the NW and SE of the village where large estates would be built. This would change forever the pleasant, rural approach. Developments need to be of a smaller scale and introduced in a more thoughtful, creative way with sustainable infrastructure. They should first embrace the use of infill developments, conversion of barns and any redundant buildings available and only then emerging sites if numbers dictate. It is important that any expansions do not create a visual intrusion to the entrances to the village, and are kept below the skyline. Building work should not be detrimental to the distinctive character of designated County landscapes.

Milnthorpe's current infrastructure would be inadequate to cope with a greatly increased population. Dallam School is almost full with a very congested site, and Milnthorpe Primary School is approaching capacity. The health facilities are very stretched with cramped conditions and poor parking. There are no day care facilities for older people in the village. We have concerns about the adequacy of sewerage treatment, as the extended treatment works on Milnthorpe Marsh have been designed to serve neighbouring areas, which are also expanding. The road systems are very congested already – A6 {North/South routes} and B6385 {West/East routes} and any substantial extra housing would create greater difficulties.

At a recent public meeting held in Milnthorpe attended by Dan Hudson (Development Strategy Manager), Andy Shine (Deputy Leader of SLDC), members of Milnthorpe Parish Council and the public, two or three Milnthorpe villagers stated that people in Ackenthwaite were happy to merge with Milnthorpe. We propose most strongly that Milnthorpe and Ackenthwaite remain separate villages and that the "green-gap" remains. The majority of Ackenthwaite residents want this and do not want to merge with Milnthorpe.

We take heart from a recent quote by Peter Thornton (Portfolio Holder—Housing and Development) in the Westmorland Gazette where he said, "sites would only be used if owners, developers and builders judge the market is ready for more houses."

Yours faithfully,
Sheila and Neil Dodds.